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District of Arizona*

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TUCSON MAN RECEIVES 123 MONTHS FOR MARIJUANA AND FIREARMS OFFENSES

PHOENIX, ARIZONA -- Paul K. Charlton, United States Attorney for the District of Arizona, announced today that Leland Thomas Deck, Age 21, of Tucson, Arizona, was sentenced to 123 months imprisonment, by United States District Judge Raner C. Collins, in Tucson, Arizona.

Deck, along with two other individuals, was arrested by U.S. Border Patrol Agents on August 17, 1999, approximately twelve miles from the United States/Mexico border in a van on Arizona State Route 286. Inside the van, Agents found bales of marijuana weighing over 600 pounds, a Colt Cobra .38 revolver loaded with hollow point ammunition, and a Ruger Mini-14 semi-automatic assault rifle with a 30 round magazine loaded with armor-piercing ammunition. The agents who performed the vehicle stop testified at trial that the weapons were positioned in such a way that each of the three occupants in the van had a weapon within arm's reach. After being arrested, Deck told one of the Border Patrol Agents that the agent was lucky he hadn't been shot.

Deck and co-defendant Joseph Orlando Leal were charged by federal indictment with Conspiracy to Possess with Intent to Distribute 100 Kilograms or More of Marijuana, Possession with Intent to

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Distribute 100 Kilograms or More of Marijuana, and Carrying and Possession of a Firearm During a Drug Trafficking Offense. The third occupant of the van, a juvenile male, was charged separately.

Deck and Leal were found guilty by a jury of the Conspiracy and Possession with Intent to Distribute Marijuana on November 30, 2001. The jury was unable to reach a verdict on the firearm count. Prior to a retrial on the firearm count, each defendant entered a guilty plea to Possession of a Firearm During a Drug Trafficking Offense.

On January 22, 2003, Deck was sentenced to serve 63 months on the drug counts and 60 months, consecutively, on the firearm count, for a total term of 123 months incarceration. Leal, who was sentenced on December 18, 2002, received a sentence of 78 months imprisonment.

The investigation in this case was conducted by agents of the United States Border Patrol, Tucson Sector, and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

The prosecution was handled by Carin C. Duryée, Assistant United States Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.

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